

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank the examiner for participating in an interview on December 16, 2002 in which the amendment set forth herein was discussed. It was agreed that changing the word "into" to "in" on line 5 of claims 1 and 16 would clarify the contact configuration of the claimed invention and would seemingly distinguish it over Kinoshita et al. ("Kinoshita"), U.S. Patent No. 4,647,136. The examiner indicated, however, that further consideration of the latter point was necessary.

The contact configuration of the claimed invention is an important distinction over Kinoshita and offers a number of advantages as stated in applicants' last reply. First, a forward-extending contact provides for a more-compliant contact. Specifically, since the contact extends from back to front in the receptacle, the free end of the contact is near the front enabling the contact to accommodate a great deal of misalignment at the front of the connector where misalignment is most likely to occur. In Kinoshita, the contact's fixed end, and, hence, its non-compliant end, is located forward in the receptacle, while the free end is rearward where its compliance is not as needed. Additionally, with the contact configuration of the claimed invention, the plug-engaging portion of the contact is relatively close to the connection portion, and, thus, provides for a relatively short distance between the plug and the printed circuit board. Shorter distances are generally desirable from the standpoint of electrical performance. In contrast, the electric path between the plug and the printed circuit board of the Kinoshita device is from the portion extending into the receptacle, up and around the perimeter of the receptacle and eventually back to the rear portion where contact is made with the printed circuit board. It should be clear, therefore, that the

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configuration of the present invention can dramatically reduce the distance between the plug and the printed circuit board.

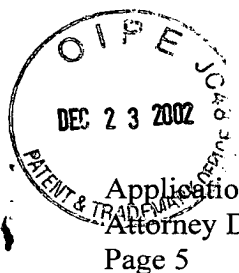
In light of the above remarks, an early allowance of the claims is earnestly solicited.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. Driscoll', is written over a horizontal line.

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APPENDIX A

MARKED UP VERSION OF CLAIMS SHOWING CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

1. (Thrice Amended) A modular jack connector assembly comprising:
 - a dielectric housing having a front and rear orientation and defining at least one receptacle adapted for receiving a mating plug;
 - a plurality of contacts disposed in said housing, each contact being secured to a rear portion of said housing, each contact extending forward in[to] said receptacle from said rear portion to a free end such that a portion of said contact forward of said rear portion electrically connects with a mating plug when the mating plug is received within said receptacle; andwherein said housing defines a slot traversing said contacts and being suitable for receiving an edge of a circuit board, and wherein a connection portion of each contact extends from said rear portion of said housing into said slot such that when said housing is mounted to a circuit board a portion of said connection portion makes contact with the circuit board.

16. (Twice Amended) A modular jack connector assembly comprising:
 - a dielectric housing having a front and rear orientation and defining at least one receptacle adapted for receiving an RJ standard compliant mating plug; and
 - a plurality of contacts disposed in said housing, each contact being secured to a rear portion of said housing, each contact extending forward in[to] said receptacle from said rear portion to a free end such that a portion of said contact forward of said rear portion electrically connects with a mating plug when the mating plug is received within said receptacle wherein said contacts are less thick and more narrow than those conforming to the RJ-standard.